SPRING 10

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CONNECTING MASSAGE PROFESSIONALS

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Helping you get the most value from your AMTA membership.

handson®
the newsletter of the american massage therapy association
SPRING 10

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As I write my inaugural President's letter for *Hands On,* I find myself reflecting on my good fortune. The holiday season has just wrapped up, the new year is in full swing and I'll soon begin my term as AMTA's new president. I'm excited to begin this new journey with AMTA.

For 2010, I have resolved to stay healthy, balanced, well-nourished and surrounded by positive friends. I am so lucky to have spent the past 10 years working at a health care clinic in Seattle, Washington, while also serving on the AMTA Board of Directors. Both arenas provide me with camaraderie, support and inspirational teamwork—all skills I feel are necessary to continue my work as a health care provider and also to serve as AMTA's president.

Through the years, I have found many similarities between my position as a massage therapist and as a member of AMTA's leadership. At Green Lake Massage Health Center, I work with 16 massage therapists, receptionists and other staff members. As an AMTA board member, I have the opportunity to collaborate with passionate AMTA members and volunteers from all over the country, in addition to the AMTA National Office staff.

At the end of the day, we are all working toward a common goal. At the clinic, we provide massage therapy, treatment plans and goals for our clients to improve their health and relieve their pain. At AMTA, we continue to focus on our mission to serve members by advancing the art, science and practice of massage therapy. In both settings, I've found that respecting others' working styles, opinions and values while recognizing talents, skills and abilities has resulted in a win-win situation for everyone involved.

That said, I'm excited about AMTA's areas of strategic focus for fiscal year 2010/2011—Professional Competency, Advocacy and Influence, and Member Experience—and to begin carrying out these plans. You can read more details about what's on tap for the year ahead on page three.

I believe one continual theme for AMTA's new fiscal year will be change. As an avid listener of songwriters like Woody and Arlo Guthrie, John Prine and Bob Dylan, I am often reminded that there is a pattern to societal culture—and change is inevitable for any organization to thrive. We must change and adapt in order to continue to climb the mountains that advance our profession.

I think one change you'll be pleased with is the evolution of our *Hands On* newsletter. To keep you better updated on all of the opportunities available to you while also making the association more "green," we are moving the newsletter to a monthly publication and switching it to an email format. On page nine, you'll find more details about what to expect from future issues of your new "E" Hands On.

In the coming year, I look forward to hearing from you—I want to know what tools and resources you need in order to help you succeed. Last holiday season, I was told that many of you were busier than anticipated. Yes, it appears that stress helps our industry to thrive, but, at the same time, many of us are concerned about our own futures.

As I mentioned earlier, my resolution for 2010 is to stay healthy, balanced and focused. I think if we take these steps together, we can absolutely continue to grow, adapt and climb those mountains!

How can AMTA help empower you in 2010 and beyond? E-mail me your thoughts at amtapresident@amtamassage.org.

Kathleen Miller-Read
AMTA President

MISSION: To serve AMTA members while advancing the art, science and practice of massage therapy.

AMTA's Plans for New Fiscal Year

Advocacy and Influence, Professional Competency and Member Experience identified as three areas of strategic focus to guide AMTA in FY 10/11.

Each year, AMTA evaluates strategies that best align with its goals and areas of strategic focus. These areas of strategic focus are considered and identified by the AMTA Board of Directors at its summer meeting.

To develop strategies that will help AMTA concentrate on the chosen areas, current AMTA processes, governance structures, year-end data, environmental scan information and results from AMTA's annual Loyalty Study are carefully evaluated. This year, AMTA also considered the current economic climate, its support of the Massage Therapy Body of Knowledge (MTBOK) project and AMTA's increased involvement in the health care community before solidifying plans and tactics for the upcoming year.

FY 10/11 STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

ADVOCACY AND INFLUENCE:
Establish greater visibility, participation and influence of AMTA in the health care community.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY:
Gain agreement for the definition, scope and entry-level education for the massage therapy profession.

MEMBER EXPERIENCE:
Position AMTA in the marketplace as having exceptional benefits that contribute to members' professional success.

Throughout FY 10/11, AMTA leadership, volunteers and staff will be guided by these areas of strategic focus that support AMTA as the premier massage therapy organization for those seeking knowledge and success in the profession. Objectives, activities, budgets, and AMTA volunteers and staff have already been assigned to each area of focus with the overarching goal of supporting AMTA's mission: to serve AMTA members while advancing the art, science and practice of massage therapy.

HOW DO AMTA'S AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS AFFECT YOU?

- The Advocacy and Influence strategic focus aims to magnify the position of AMTA members within the broad health care community. AMTA is not only working to provide you with more opportunities to work within health care settings, but to also increase the number of referrals that you, as a massage therapist, receive from health care practitioners.
- Our focus on Professional Competency translates into AMTA continuing in its role as a steward for the MTBOK effort and putting its ideas into practice. The industry-wide resource established by the MTBOK will provide a more consistent educational experience that will result in more consistent care.
- Providing the highest quality member benefits remains AMTA's core business. Empowering you with practical benefits that will help you succeed now and in the future is all part of our strategic focus on Member Experience.

>> To learn more about how AMTA's areas of strategic focus are being put into action, be sure to check out future issues of *Hands On*.

MEET YOUR 2010 – 2011

The Board of Directors is elected by AMTA members and is responsible for effectively managing AMTA's resources to ensure the delivery of high-quality member benefits. The board also evaluates current trends and develops plans to advance AMTA and the massage therapy profession.

PRESIDENT
KATHLEEN MILLER-READ
Shoreline, Washington

For nearly three decades, I have practiced massage in a diverse group of settings, including spas, ski resorts, physicians' offices and my own clinic. I'm currently employed as a health care provider. I volunteer for AMTA because I believe in our mission: to advance the art, science and practice of massage therapy, and in our vision for portability. I have truly enjoyed working with the dynamic members that I have met while serving AMTA, and I look forward to continuing that journey as your president.

PRESIDENT-ELECT
GLENATH MOYLE
Portland, Oregon

I have been in private practice as a massage therapist since 1989. During that time, I have volunteered in various roles for the AMTA-Oregon Chapter and at the national level. I have also served on the Oregon licensing board as a board member, chairperson and practical examiner. Being of service to AMTA members and to the profession is a constant source of inspiration for me. I delight in "paying it forward."

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
JUDY STAHL
Prescott, Arizona

My volunteerism with AMTA began in 1992 with the Arizona Chapter. Since that time, I have served in various volunteer roles with AMTA, including president. Currently, my focus is on healing and spirituality, a holographic view of life and my place within it, living a non-personal life within a personal consciousness and following internal guidance as informed by external experience. I am busy writing a book, consulting, exploring nature, teaching and mentoring. As always, I am honored to be of service to the profession.

VICE PRESIDENT
WINONA BONTRAGER
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

I have been a massage therapist since 1986. I owned a full-time private practice until 1991 when I switched directions and opened the Lancaster School of Massage. Although I'm in the classroom on a regular basis, I still maintain a private practice within the school clinic. I have a great passion for the students and for massage schools. I volunteered with the AMTA Council of Schools for eight years and served on the board this past year as a member-at-large. I am currently serving as vice president and am excited for the new learning opportunities!

VICE PRESIDENT
WILLIAM J. GREENBERG
Fairfield, Connecticut

Twenty-five years ago, I looked to massage therapy as a second career; I knew it would be both rewarding to me and helpful to others. I first became active in the AMTA-Connecticut Chapter, holding numerous offices. I feel ethics are of primary importance and served as chair of the National Commission on Grievances for nine years. I've served on the board as a member-at-large and now as vice president and Finance Committee Chair. I look forward to using my expertise and experience for the continued growth of AMTA.

VICE PRESIDENT
CYNTHIA RIBEIRO
Laguna Hills, California

I own the Western Institute of Neuromuscular Therapy, a school specializing in neuromuscular therapy and orthopedic massage. I've taught anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, pathology of injuries, and field and clinical massage since 1988. In 2003, I became an honorary clinical professor at the University of California, Irvine, Medical School, where I teach functional anatomy and differential diagnosis for myofascial pain and dysfunction. I have a passion for my work, both as a therapist and an instructor.

AMTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE
JULIE FINN
Commerce Township, Michigan

I have practiced massage since 1990. I started as a contract massage therapist and for the past eight years, I have been the owner of JB Therapeutic and Sports Massage. I have had the privilege of volunteering for AMTA since 1990. I first became involved at the chapter level, volunteering in many positions. At the national level, I served as member-at-large 2007–2009 and was a co-chair on the Board Assessment Workgroup. I am looking forward to the year ahead.

MAUREEN MOON
Boulder, Colorado

I have been practicing massage therapy since 1981 in the ski town of Boulder, Colorado. I practiced at an athletic club from 1986–2007 and I am now a contract practitioner, which I truly enjoy. I am also currently a spinal reflex analysis instructor and hot/cold stone massage instructor. My philosophical and personal goals with my clients are to facilitate their ability to obtain optimal health, well-being and relaxation by decreasing pain, reducing stress and increasing body awareness. I have served in various capacities with the AMTA-Colorado Chapter and at the AMTA National level since 1987.

JEFF SMOOT
Elk City, Oklahoma

I first joined AMTA as a student in 1991. I served as the AMTA-Oklahoma Chapter president 2001–2006 and just completed my first year as member-at-large on the board. My business, the Myofascial Pain Clinic, provides therapy based on the research completed by Janet Travell, MD, and employs six massage therapists. Volunteering for AMTA provides me with the opportunity to give back to the profession that has enriched my life.

RACHEL MANN
Wilmington, North Carolina

I left a business career in 1994 to attend massage therapy school and pursue a more fulfilling work and personal life. Since that time, I have been in business for myself practicing primarily in pain management with modalities ranging from Trager to deep tissue to Rossiter. I joined AMTA as a student and became an active volunteer in 1999. I have served the chapter in many roles, including president. I have also served on several national committees and workgroups. I've met many wonderful friends through volunteering and look forward to serving our members.

NANCY M. PORAMBO
Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania

I've been in private practice for 20 years, specializing in neuromuscular therapy and effective treatments for chronic pain. I completed graduate studies in 2002 and teach courses in massage schools, as well as college-level psychology courses. I have volunteered with the AMTA-Pennsylvania Chapter since 1992 and also served as president. I have been an advocate for licensure in the state of Pennsylvania, which passed in 2008. I've been fortunate to enjoy a successful career. In return, I want to help AMTA move forward on a path marked by professionalism, advocacy and public service.

DOLLY WALLACE
Muskegon, Michigan

I have been the co-owner of Wallace Chiropractic for over 25 years, overseeing all aspects of the business while also practicing massage therapy. A member for over 20 years, I have served on the Government Relations Committee since 2004, serving as chair from 2004–2007. I also served on the board as member-at-large 1996–1999. I look forward to continuing AMTA's work in supporting state regulation, setting standards for education, seeking portability and educating the public on the benefits of massage therapy.

MEET AMTA'S NATIONAL OFFICE

Carrying out the direction of the AMTA Board of Directors, AMTA staff is charged with developing and delivering a vast array of career-related resources to help empower AMTA members.

ELIZABETH M. LUCAS

Executive Director

As executive director of AMTA, I work in partnership with the board, volunteers, members, staff and stakeholders of the profession to serve our members and advance the profession. I have been with AMTA for nearly fifteen years and I am honored to help build a shared vision among the members, staff and the profession–and to help make that vision a reality. In my day-to-day role, I'm responsible for ensuring the board's direction is carried out in a way that successfully adapts to the changing needs of AMTA members and the profession.

SHELLY JOHNSON

Deputy Director

I joined AMTA in 2002 and have more than 20 years experience working with membership organizations like AMTA, including the American Hospital Association, the American Association of Neuroscience Nurses and the American Society for Quality. As part of the leadership team, I lead staff in marketing, member experience, knowledge transfer, and the website and database areas. We all work hard to deliver member value, increase AMTA's benefits and services, and ensure a first-rate experience for AMTA members.

LARRY LABODA

Chief Financial Officer

I joined AMTA this past January and am looking forward to being an integral part of the organization. Over the last 30 years, I have worked in just about every part of a finance department in both for- and not-for-profit environments, including accounting, treasury, investment management, tax, risk management and insurance, facilities, human resources and information technology. My primary responsibilities include managing AMTA's assets and delivering the financial information needed to successfully move AMTA forward.

WILLIAM BROWN

Director of Government and Industry Relations

With more than 15 years of leadership experience in and around the legislative process, I have a strategic approach to coalition building that is reflected in my current work with AMTA. My team and I oversee the association's government relations program, including research, legislative tracking, strategic planning, training, legislative outreach and chapter consultation. We also manage AMTA's relationships, programs and memberships with key industry stakeholders, including those related to health care, spa and consumer quality.

DAVID FRENCH

Director of Marketing

I have 15 years of experience working in different aspects of marketing. I joined AMTA in January 2004 and oversee staff responsible for marketing research, product development and management, and marketing. The marketing team works closely with members, volunteers and other AMTA staff in order to develop and deliver products, programs and services that have high value for our members.

KAREN KUBEK

Director of Member Experience

When I joined AMTA in April of 2008, I brought to the association more than 20 years of business management experience from both the not-for-profit and corporate worlds. As director of member experience, I lead a team of dedicated individuals responsible for the day-to-day operations of AMTA's customer service center, support services, accounts receivable, member recruitment, member retention and school account management. We consider ourselves one team with one goal: To provide each member with an exceptional service experience.

LEADERSHIP

GINI OHLSON

Director of the Massage Therapy Foundation

The Massage Therapy Foundation annually grants funds for massage therapy research and community service projects in the United States and abroad. I've served as its director for 10 years. Prior to this I worked for the Institute of Real Estate Management Foundation and The Actuarial Foundation, and in all of these foundations I've worked in both a grant-making and grant-seeking capacity. I also serve as a board member and volunteer for several local agencies.

JOCELYN PYSARCHUK

Director of Knowledge Transfer

I joined AMTA in October of 2008 and bring 10 years of experience in communications and program development for nonprofits. At AMTA, I oversee a team of dedicated professionals working on the development and delivery of all of the association's communications efforts, publications and education content. The Knowledge Transfer team is responsible for promoting and supporting the professionalism of the association and its members through internal and external communications; publications, including newsletters and the award-winning mtj; and professional development resources that include online education courses, the Massage Information Center and our national convention.

MARK TYLE

Director of Governance and Chapter Relations

I've been with AMTA for more than 15 years. Prior to my time with AMTA, I worked for two consulting companies in the training and development of both for-profit and nonprofit boards. My team and I support our chapter volunteers in expressing AMTA's mission to our members locally, as well as supporting national governance functions such as the AMTA Board of Directors elections and the AMTA House of Delegates activities. We also provide a variety of face to face and online training for chapter and national volunteer leaders.

GET INVOLVED: BECOME AN AMTA VOLUNTEER!

Volunteering for AMTA is both educational and rewarding! AMTA has a variety of programs that allow you to contribute your time and unique talents. No matter where your interests lie, volunteering for AMTA can provide you with both professional and personal fulfillment. These are just a few of AMTA's volunteer opportunities:

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

AMTA members can volunteer for a range of community events that utilize massage therapy skills.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: OPEN ENDED OPPORTUNITIES

AMTA members can get involved long term with a variety of programs seeking massage therapists for an extended period of time.

OPEN POSITIONS: CHAPTER OPPORTUNITIES

The chapter board governs the activities of the chapter and terms of office are for two years. Committee work is the center of action in the chapter and can be short term or task oriented. Additional information can be found by visiting your chapter's website.

OPEN POSITIONS: NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

AMTA is very fortunate to have a talented group of individuals who support AMTA's mission. We are continually seeking dedicated members to be involved in leadership roles, serve on various committees and assist in organizational strategic planning.

>> GET INVOLVED TODAY!

Visit Volunteer Connections by logging onto amtamassage.org and clicking on "Volunteer" within the left-hand navigation. Or, contact Melissa Spani, volunteer development program manager, at **mspani@amtamassage.org**.

now online @amtamassage.org

AMTA'S NEWEST ONLINE COURSE: "12 SELF-CARE STEPS"

Searching for ways to achieve balance in your busy life? AMTA's newest online course will show you how to integrate mind, body and spirit through a simple 12-step process. Discover self-care techniques for finding your center, learn preventive care steps you can take right now and find out why setting boundaries is so important to your overall health. You'll benefit both professionally and personally, and ultimately become a better practitioner!

AMTA Online Courses are available for continuing education credit and are a convenient way to gain new knowledge or reinforce existing skills in the areas of business, ethics, modalities and self-care. AMTA's Online Courses can be used toward AMTA's professional member continuing education requirement and many state massage therapy licensing requirements.

>>Enroll now: **www.amtaonlinetraining.org/home**

12
self-care steps
YOUR PROFESSION IS A DEMANDING ONE. TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF IS NECESSARY.
BY ARIANA VINCENT
Massage therapists are in the unique position of being in a profession that is both physically and mentally demanding. Helping your clients find relief from pain and stress can take its toll on your own body if you aren't diligent about self-care. The following article will give you several ideas you can use to ensure that, as well as taking care of your clients, you are also keeping yourself healthy
COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this course is to help you achieve a balance in your busy life. By integrating mind, body and spirit through this simple 12-step process, you can make a state of balance an integral part of your daily life. This self-care will benefit you both personally and professionally.
CE CREDITS : 4.0
COURSE OBJECTIVES
This course describes a simple 12-step process of self-care. When you finish this course you will be able to:
• List three benefits of practicing a program of self-care.
• List four techniques for nurturing yourself.
• Define the value of setting boundaries.
• List five ways preventive care will protect you.
• List four ways to tailor a physical exercise program to your needs.
• Describe how to benefit from gravity, body awareness and reinvention of body mechanics.
• List six techniques that protect your hands.
• List three ways to ensure clear communication.
• List four benefits of mindfulness.
• Describe how practicing good ethics and massage for yourself are of benefit to you.
• List four ways to refresh your perspective.
• Describe three breathing techniques.
• Define the role of compassionate love in the massage therapy setting.

AMTA Website Upgraded With "You" in Mind!

Upgrades to AMTA's website have been made to help empower you in better managing your member information. Enhancements include:

- Edit your contact information, including your mailing address, phone number and e-mail address
- Manage your continuing education transcript as well as your credentials such as national certification and state license number
- Manage your profile in AMTA's Find A Massage Therapist® national locator service
- Renew your membership more efficiently

AMTA is continuing to enhance its online presence to bring you even more of the tools and resources you need to succeed!

>>Coming soon! Check amtamassage.org again later this summer for a fresh new look and even more upgrades.

UPDATE YOUR PROFILE ON AMTA'S FIND A MASSAGE THERAPIST® (FAMT) NATIONAL LOCATOR SERVICE

Did you know there are more than 700,000 searches for AMTA members each year through the FAMT service? Make sure your profile is up-to-date or register today to start getting leads! Just visit **www.findamassagetherapist.org** to get started.

balance

AMTA 2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
Minneapolis MN
September 22-25

Save the Date!

Start planning now to attend AMTA's 2010 National Convention, September 22-25, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. If you joined us last year in Orlando, then you're no stranger to all the AMTA National Convention has to offer you–both professionally and personally!

New to the AMTA National Convention? No matter what your level of experience, AMTA has an educational program perfect for you. Plus, the opportunity to network with fellow massage therapists from across the nation is invaluable.

>> Early-bird registration will open soon. Check your email and **amtamassage.org** for details and to learn more about this year's education and events. Be sure to reserve your place–top courses sell out quickly!

AMTA Holds 2010 Massage Therapy Schools Summit

TAKING PLACE FEBRUARY 18–19, AMTA's 2010 Massage Therapy Schools Summit, an expansion of AMTA's annual schools conference, was redesigned to feature enhanced and targeted education geared specifically toward massage school faculty, owners and administrators. Highlights of the conference included interest tracks taught by well-known industry leaders, sessions on hot topics impacting schools, and countless opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue with colleagues. "Innovative Retention Practices," "Marketing Your School Through Social Media" and "Being Resilient in Changing Times" were just some of the school-focused education sessions presented.

>>Couldn't make it to Florida this year? Highlights from presentations will be available online soon. Check your email for an update or visit **amtamassage.org/schools.html**

Going "E"

AMTA's *Hands On* Switching to E-newsletter

In order to bring you more timely information and to ensure you are getting the most value from your membership, AMTA will be delivering future issues of its *Hands On* newsletter in an e-mail format.

Our latest *Hands On* reader survey indicates that nearly 80 percent of AMTA members prefer to receive the newsletter in an electronic format. Not only will you stay better informed, but the switch to a digital format also aids in AMTA's efforts to be more environmentally conscious.

So, instead of receiving a print version of *Hands On* along with your usual, quarterly issue of *mtj*, you'll receive an up-to-date issue each month right in your e-mail inbox! You'll stay up to speed on opportunities in your community, as well as the trends and issues affecting AMTA and the profession right now.

Look for your first issue of *E-Hands On* in your inbox beginning in March. Also, be sure to check out more AMTA-focused content in your next issue of *mtj*.

As always, feel free to let us know how we can better communicate with you. **E-mail us at handson@amtamassage.org**

AMTA VOLUNTEERING AT SUSAN G. KOMEN 3 DAY FOR THE CURE® EVENTS

For the second straight year, AMTA will be the official provider of volunteer massage therapists at the Energizer Live it Up! Lounge at all 15 nationwide Susan G. Komen 3 Day for the Cure® events.

At the events, participants walk 60 miles over the course of three days to raise funds to support breast cancer research. AMTA hopes to match last year's incredible participation of more than 300 enthusiastic AMTA volunteers who donated their time and talent to a worthy cause.

Check out the list below for 2010 Susan G. Komen 3 Day for the Cure cities and dates. Exact locations will be announced closer to the date of the event.

BOSTON	JULY 23–25, 2010
CLEVELAND	JULY 30–AUGUST 1, 2010
CHICAGO	AUGUST 6–8, 2010
MICHIGAN (DETROIT AREA)	AUGUST 13–15, 2010
TWIN CITIES	AUGUST 20–22, 2010
DENVER	AUGUST 27–29, 2010
SEATTLE	SEPTEMBER 24–26, 2010
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA	OCTOBER 1–3, 2010
WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA	OCTOBER 8–10, 2010
PHILADELPHIA	OCTOBER 15–17, 2010
ATLANTA	OCTOBER 22–24, 2010
TAMPA BAY	OCTOBER 29–31, 2010
DALLAS/FORT WORTH	NOVEMBER 5–7, 2010
ARIZONA (PHOENIX AREA)	NOVEMBER 12–14, 2010
SAN DIEGO	NOVEMBER 19–21, 2010

>> To volunteer for this event or for other volunteer opportunities, visit the Volunteer Connections area of the AMTA website: **www.amtamassage.org/member/volunteer.html**

MTBOK TASK FORCE UPDATE

The Massage Therapy Body of Knowledge (MTBOK) Task Force released the second draft of Phase 1 for public review and comment on January 29, 2010. To review the document and provide input, visit the official MTBOK website at **www.mtbok.org**. AMTA School members were able to provide first input at AMTA's 2010 Schools Summit—now you can too!

AMTA encourages you to participate in this important initiative to ensure the MTBOK is truly developed by and for the massage therapy community. Don't miss your opportunity to comment on this important effort to advance the profession.

>> Visit **www.mtbok.org** to read the revised draft and offer your thoughts and feedback on this important, profession-wide initiative.

•••

AMTA Attending Integrative Healthcare Symposium

AMTA membership will be represented at the Integrative Healthcare Symposium this February 25–27 in New York City. The symposium includes lectures, interactive sessions, case presentations and experiential workshops presented by leading pioneers covering emerging research and other issues in health care. The program also offers discussion and updates on federal changes for integrative practices and emerging trends. Symposium attendees include integrative health care practitioners and professionals seeking the latest evidence-based research, clinical information and peer-to-peer networking. Look for relevant highlights from the 2010 Integrative Healthcare Symposium in the next issue of *Hands On*.

THINKING ABOUT INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT?

Know the Facts / Weigh the Benefits & Risks

With the recent health care debates taking place in Washington, D.C., and across the nation, AMTA has seen an increase in the number of questions dealing with health insurance reimbursement. While the issue remains complex and is continually evolving, AMTA recently spoke with Susan Rosen, AMTA's representative to the American Medical Association's (AMA's) Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Health Care Professional's Advisory Committee, to put together some of the basic facts about insurance reimbursement. An excerpt of AMTA's Q&A with Rosen is below.

Q: What are some of the most important things massage therapists should know before considering insurance reimbursement?

A: Health care is a moving landscape, and it's easy to get intimidated. However, in order to continue to advance our profession, we need to be willing to be part of the larger health care conversation. In Washington state, where I practice, massage therapists are recognized as health care providers, but we still have a choice as to whether or not we bill insurance companies for our services. And, just like every state handles massage therapy licensing differently, each insurance company handles reimbursement differently. Massage therapists should educate themselves before determining if insurance reimbursement can be beneficial to their practice.

Q: How do individual states' massage therapy practice laws influence whether a massage therapist can bill for insurance reimbursement?

A: A state's massage therapy board (or other governing board) determines whether a specific procedure or service is within a massage therapist's scope of practice. *Even though a state allows a massage therapist to perform a specific procedure or service, it does not guarantee that the therapist will be reimbursed for the service.* This is determined by the client's coverage and if the specific insurance company reimburses massage therapists for their services.

Q: How do massage therapists find out if their clients have coverage for massage therapy services?

A: Ideally, massage therapists should have their clients contact their health insurance companies before an appointment and ask if a massage therapy benefit is included in their coverage. Clients should also confirm that the therapy can be performed by a massage therapist.

Q: What are CPT codes and who develops them?

A: CPT stands for Current Procedural Terminology. The codes describe specific procedures and services performed by physicians and health care providers. They represent the standard terminology used to bill for insurance reimbursement. The AMA forms committees to develop and review the CPT codes. As AMTA's CPT representative, I discuss issues related to the CPT codes that impact massage therapists.

Q: What are the specific CPT codes that massage therapists can use?

A: CPT Codes 97124, 97140, 97112, 97010 and 97110 are all used by massage therapists—some are more commonly used than others. For clarification on these codes, please reference *American Medical Association. CPT, Professional Edition, 2010.* Before billing the insurance company, massage therapists should first confirm they are eligible providers and also confirm which codes the company accepts for that specific client. Massage therapy services are also covered under personal injury protection (PIP) through auto insurance, which is separate from health insurance coverage.

Q: Where can a therapist find forms for insurance billing? Are there companies that handle insurance billing?

A: Insurance reimbursement forms can be found through health insurance websites. For electronic billing refer to OneHealthPort.com. Alternatively, there are companies that will complete and submit all required insurance billing paperwork for the provider.

>> For the full version of this Q&A, visit AMTA's Massage Information Center (MIC) at **amtamassage.org/infocenter** and click on "Small Business Resources and Insurance Billing."

THE FACTS…

AMTA's 2010 Massage Profession Research Report indicates that more massage therapists are receiving insurance reimbursement for massages.

- 19% of massage therapists receive insurance reimbursement; back up from a dip reported in 2008.
- However, significantly fewer massage therapists feel participating in insurance reimbursement is worthwhile for their practice.

You can read more about the state of the profession in the *mtj* article "You Are Here" beginning on p. 28 of the Spring Issue.

WHERE DO **YOU WORK?**

Practicing Massage Therapy in a Health Care Setting

A veteran massage therapist, Kathleen Paholsky has not only practiced massage therapy for nearly three decades, but she has also shared her vast knowledge by working as an educator in the field.

Knowledgeable, well-educated and armed with a diverse skill-set, Kathleen recently began her new position at Beaumont Hospital in Troy, Michigan, where she is the center's first cranial sacral therapist.

What first attracted you to the massage therapy profession?
Like many of us, I had friends and family members who were suffering from aches, pains and sports injuries. I found that hands-on work provided them with not only physical relief, but a new attitude.

What career path has led you to your current position at Beaumont Hospital?
I've been doing massage and bodywork for almost 30 years. For the last 10, I have focused primarily on cranial sacral therapy. I've also been teaching massage for the past 25 years. I landed my current position at Beaumont because they were looking for a certified cranial therapist with the highest level of education, and I have both.

What specific experiences or types of education have helped you succeed and progress in your current role?
In addition to massage and bodywork training, I also hold graduate degrees in the natural health sciences. I am certified in cranial sacral work through the Milne Institute. This extensive training took me more than five years, and provided me with a solid foundation in understanding body, mind and spirit. I have also taught integrative medicine courses with physicians and physician's assistants—this has led me to value and understand traditional medical work as well.

What advice would you offer other massage therapists looking to establish themselves within a health care setting?
Get plenty of training in anatomy, physiology, pathology, pharmacology and medical terminology. Learn to communicate effectively with traditional medical practitioners. Be sure to ask yourself, "Is this type of work right for me?" In a hospital, you will see critically ill patients. I use my massage therapy training and skills as a solid foundation for much of the cranial work I do.

How would you describe the setting you work in now, compared to other settings where you have practiced?
Previous massage rooms I worked in were compact and efficient in size and layout. I shared office space with practitioners and chiropractors, and did not always have input in the environment.

My current setting takes into consideration the whole person, and is decorated to be as healing to the eyes and ears as it is to the rest of the body. At our office, there are massage therapists, Reiki practitioners, guided imagery specialists, acupuncturists, naturopaths and myself (cranial sacral therapist) all working together. We frequently receive referrals from physicians. And because the space is part of the hospital, we are held to very strict regulations regarding epidemiology, HIPAA and the Joint Commission.

What skills are expected of a massage therapist practicing in a health care setting?
Being educated in anatomy, physiology, pathology and medical terminology are all key components to a career in a health care setting. And an understanding of traditional Western medicine is absolutely necessary. Knowing what is happening to the body as a result of different treatments can make the difference between me being able to help a patient or not.

What do you think the outlook is for massage therapists looking to practice within health care-related settings?
Unlimited, as long as you acquire the proper training and skills. The growth in the past 10 years has been amazing, and I think it can be double in the next 10. It takes investment of time and money in order to learn the right skills, though. I've been practicing for nearly 30 years, and I still continue my studies. Traditionally, physicians have been slow to accept our work. However, the growth in research has been and will continue to be a major factor in our ability to expand our work within the health care community.

>>Thinking of pursuing a career in a health care setting? AMTA offers a wealth of online career resources. Visit **amtamassage.org** and search "career guides," or explore AMTA's online CE courses at **www.amtaonlinetraining.org**.

A DECADE MARKED BY VOLUNTEERISM

The start of a new decade is a good opportunity to look back at accomplishments, and AMTA members have a lot to be proud of over the last 10 years. While the nation faced unprecedented events like Hurricane Katrina, the attacks of 911 and the economic challenges beginning in 2008, a spirit of volunteerism was ignited within AMTA members. Across the nation, AMTA members mobilized and reached out to their communities through the power of touch.

AMTA MEMBERS COME TOGETHER AFTER 9/11

After the devastating events of September 11, 2001, AMTA members showed their commitment to well-being through participating in AMTA's Massage Emergency Response Teams (MERT) in many states. Hundreds of AMTA members volunteered through MERT to provide massage to responders at the sites in New York City, the Pentagon and Pennsylvania, bringing massage relief for months to those who worked to save survivors and then to those responsible for cleanup.

CVOP PROGRAM RALLIES CHAPTER VOLUNTEERS

In 2003, AMTA launched its annual Chapter Volunteer Orientation Program (CVOP) to train chapter volunteers. By the end of the decade, nearly every chapter was represented at the annual program, demonstrating members' dedication to volunteerism.

MEMBERS DONATE TIME AND FUNDS TO THOSE AFFECTED BY GULF HURRICANES

The destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 impacted many lives. AMTA members volunteered to help relief workers cope with the stress by providing massage for Red Cross volunteers, initial responders and evacuees. What's more, AMTA members, chapters and the AMTA Board donated more than $100,000 to members impacted by the storms. And, AMTA provided Practitioner Member Rebuilding Kits, which included basic equipment and supplies, to members whose practices were destroyed.

AMTA LAUNCHES VOLUNTEER CONNECTIONS

In 2008, AMTA created Volunteer Connections, a program to organize its spirit of giving in productive ways. In 2008 and 2009, nearly 1,100 AMTA members volunteered for 118 service activities. AMTA has collaborated with major non-profit charities, including Susan G. Komen for the Cure, American Heart Association, Special Olympics, American Cancer Society, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Make-a-Wish Foundation.

MEMBERS SUPPORT MEMBERS THROUGH RECESSION

Many massage therapists were negatively affected by the economic recession at the end of the decade. Several AMTA chapters helped defray membership costs in 2009 by covering chapter fees for one year or decreasing fees for education courses.

13 YEARS OF NATIONAL MASSAGE THERAPY AWARENESS WEEK®

AMTA began celebrating NMTAW in 1997; by 2000, it already had become the single biggest industry-wide promoter of public information on massage therapy. During the week, AMTA members come together to share their expertise and participate in myriad volunteer opportunities. In 2009, media coverage of NMTAW and massage exploded, with information viewed by consumers more than 100 million times!

>> Read the full press release focused on the 20 top AMTA stories and achievements of the past decade in the Newsroom at **amtamassage.org**

Other Member-Focused Initiatives of the Past Decade

AMTA launched major initiatives, took bold action to advance the profession and offered unmatched benefits over the past decade.

- Online Job Bank Re-launched in 2006
- **More CEs Offered Through Online Courses**
- Launch of AMTA's Online Shopping Mall
- **First Annual Overview of State of Massage Industry Released in 2006**
- **AMTA Begins Voicing Views Through Position Statements**
- **AMTA Convenes Industry Groups for MTBOK Project**
- AMTA Helps Boost Number of States Regulating Massage From 29 to 43
- **AMTA Announces Support of MBLEX as Licensing Exam in 2009**

AMTA NEWS & UPDATES

BOARD NOTES

RESULTS OF THE 2009 ELECTIONS OF THE AMERICAN MASSAGE THERAPY ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCED

The 2009 Commissioner of Elections recently announced the results of the 2009 elections of AMTA. The 2009 election tellers report is currently available on the AMTA website at: www.amtamassage.org/member/pdf/2009TellersReport.pdf

>> You can read more about the 2010/2011 AMTA Board of Directors in this issue of *Hands On* on pages four and five.

2008 ILLINOIS CHAPTER BYLAW AMENDMENT RECOMMENDATION APPROVED BY AMTA BOARD

The Bylaw Amendment Recommendation submitted by the AMTA-Illinois Chapter requested the following be added as Article III, Section 2.A.1.b

"For any jurisdiction in which the member practices massage, the member must hold a valid license, registration or certification issued by that state, territory, District of Columbia, or municipal government, if such credential is required by law to practice massage in that jurisdiction."

This recommendation was approved by the board at its September 2009 meeting in Orlando, Florida, and is now part of AMTA Bylaws.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE APPROVED FOR 2010 AMTA NATIONAL ELECTION

In June 2009, the board voted to permit the use of personal websites, e-mail, blogs, social media and other online applications as tools to interactively communicate a candidate's experience for the 2010 national election. Following the vote, the Commission on Candidacy was charged with reviewing all AMTA policy and procedures and recommending any other needed changes to address use of electronic communication by candidates. On its December 2009 conference call, the board voted to accept the policy changes recommended by the commission.

For the 2010 AMTA national election, candidates are allowed to use personal websites, e-mail, blogs, social media and other online applications as tools to communicate their experience and to engage with any members who have questions about their candidacy. The option provides a new method for members to learn more about candidates, while still prohibiting active campaigning.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES NOTES

*AND THE VOTES ARE IN.....*RESULTS OF THE 2009 HOUSE OF DELEGATES MEETING

The AMTA House of Delegates (HOD) voted on two recommendations at its annual meeting on September 24, during the AMTA National Convention. The House approved the recommendation submitted by the Indiana Chapter recommending that the "National Board of Directors include in their 2010 budget compensation to hire and train full-time field representatives to travel to and promote AMTA to schools and students for increased membership and lasting relationships, with territories left up to the AMTA National Office to decide along with job descriptions to promote professional excellence." For voting details on this recommendation, please visit www.amtamassage.org/member/chapters/house_delegates.html and select the 2009 minutes.

Did you know individual members have the opportunity to propose directions AMTA should pursue or changes AMTA should make in the way it functions by submitting recommendations to their chapters?

If recommendations are approved by chapters, they are submitted to the House of Delegates Operations Committee by the chapters or chapter delegates. After the HOD approves the recommendations, they are forwarded to the board for further consideration. For a recommendation to be considered at the next meeting, it must be submitted by March 15, 2010.

>> Submit a recommendation by contacting one of your chapter delegates. Visit your chapter's website for more information.

NOMINATE A COLLEAGUE FOR A 2010 AMTA NATIONAL OR CHAPTER AWARD!

The 2010 award nomination deadlines are fast approaching! To view information about 2009 recipients and to find 2010 nomination forms, visit: **www.amtamassage.org/awards**

MARCH 1 – Give Chapters a Hand Award Nominations Deadline

APRIL 1 – National Award Nominations Deadline

>> Please contact Melissa Spani, AMTA volunteer development program manager, at **mspani@amtamassage.org** with questions.

>> As a nonprofit, member-driven organization, AMTA values the input of our members in our governing process. Share your feedback any time by visiting amtamassage.org.

MASSAGE THERAPY FOUNDATION NEWS

MASSAGE THERAPY FOR THE UNDERSERVED: HOW TO LAUNCH A SUCCESSFUL AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Over the years, many practitioners have come to us with a desire to provide massage and bodywork to populations in need. The Massage Therapy Foundation is committed to bringing therapeutic massage to underserved populations, and it is our belief that community service projects can be the catalyst. As you may know, we offer community service grants to practitioners who partner with local organizations. Unfortunately, our limited budget prevents us from funding every proposal we receive.

To address this need, we have created a set of resources to assist practitioners in starting and sustaining their own community service projects. The Massage Therapy Foundation values philanthropy and seeks to motivate practitioners to volunteer in their communities to make a difference.

>>To download these resources, just visit **www.massagetherapyfoundation.org/communityservice.html**

REGISTER NOW FOR HIGHLIGHTING MASSAGE THERAPY IN CIM RESEARCH MAY 13 – 15, 2010, *SEATTLE, WASHINGTON*

This three-day conference will bring together massage and manual therapy practitioners, educators, CIM researchers, allied health professionals and others interested in massage research. Current research related to massage and manual therapies will be presented, with a special focus on translational research and public health.

Three-day conference registration rate:
$375 early bird rate
$425 standard rate after April 1, 2010

"The Massage Therapy Foundation continues to bring awareness of the crucial importance of research in advancing our profession. This should be a hallmark event to share the great advances made for all of us."
- Whitney Lowe, LMT

>> To register online, view a preliminary agenda and learn more, visit: **www.massagetherapyfoundation.org/researchconference2010.html**

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Recently, AMTA member Phillipa Dodson came to us with a very generous pledge. She pledged to donate one percent of her gross receipts to the Massage Therapy Foundation. When asked what inspired her to make this generous gift, Phillipa said "Massage has been a great career for me and it is organizations like yours that have helped to legitimize our profession."

The Massage Therapy Foundation thanks Phillipa for helping to promote collaborative research, deepen the understanding of massage therapy and bring massage to people in need.

>> To make your donation today, please visit: **www.massagetherapyfoundation.org/found_makedonation.html**

REMINDER - 2010 GRANTING DEADLINES APPROACHING

MARCH 1 – RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE

MARCH 1 – STUDENT CASE REPORT SUBMISSIONS DUE

APRIL 1 – COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE

As the primary benefactor for the foundation, AMTA's financial support helps the foundation carry out its mission and reinforces AMTA's goal for evidence-informed massage practice.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS

BUILD, SUSTAIN & GROW WITH AMTA BENEFITS

New Free Member Benefit – Create Your Own Website!

Make your practice more visible to current and prospective clients by creating your own website!

Many of you have requested AMTA provide a way for you to create a website to help promote your practice. We listened to your feedback and partnered with trusted vendor BodyworkSites to come up with a new member benefit to help empower you to build your practice:

A FREE WEBSITE FOR ALL PROFESSIONAL AND STUDENT MEMBERS:

EASY TO SET UP Save your energy for your practice and clients. It only takes five minutes to set up your new website.

5 PAGES OF CONTENT *What makes your practice unique?* Tell prospective clients about modalities that are your specialty, what to expect for their first massage, how they should contact you and more.

27 TEMPLATES Customize the look of your site. Integrate the personality of your practice into the design of your website.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT Have questions while customizing your website? Get the answers you need by emailing Association Web Pro's knowledgeable tech support team.

Having a unique Web presence is an easy way to market your skills and your passion for massage. Use this new benefit to connect with new clients, communicate with current clients and, most importantly, promote your practice!

>> To start using this new member-only benefit, just visit amtamassage.org and login with your member ID and password. Click on the "Create Your Own Website" link.

AMTA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY 18–19, 2010
AMTA 2010 Massage Therapy Schools Summit
St. Pete Beach, FL

MARCH 6, 2010
AMTA Board of Directors Meeting
Evanston, IL

MAY 13–15, 2010
Massage Therapy Foundation: Highlighting Massage Therapy in CIM Research
Seattle, WA

SEPTEMBER 21, 2010
AMTA Board of Directors Meeting
Minneapolis, MN

SEPTEMBER 22–25, 2010
AMTA 2010 National Convention
Minneapolis, MN
Registration Opens in March

OCTOBER 24-30, 2010
National Massage Therapy Awareness Week®

For more information: amtamassage.org